telecast from January 21, 2004 using IGNOU infrastructure under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture Central Sector Scheme 'Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension'.

(b) The farmers are imparted information about the common crop diseases and how to minimize damage, meteorological information etc. It is also proposed to offer education programmes to help upgrade the knowledge and expertise of extension workers, field level officials and other functionaries.

(c) and (d) Some collaborative arrangements with select universities are being proposed. Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) and various universities under its purview are contributing films on identified themes, and their academics are members of the Expert Committees and regularly participate in the teleconference session. Primarily, Hindi is the medium of instructions and, if necessary, English is also used.

Latin American Area Studies Programme

190. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the University Grants Commission has received any applications from the Universities to start Area Studies Programmes dealing with Latin America;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of Universities at present where UGC is supporting the Latin American Area Studies Programmes;

(d) whether it is a fact that the Andhra University has sought expansion of its Area Studies Programmes; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI). (a) to (c) Goa University has started Latin American Area Studies Programme with the support of UGC. However, no fresh proposal has been received from any other university in this regard.

(d) and (e) A proposal was received from Andhra Uniyersity, Waltair for the establishment for centre for Central Asian Studies. The proposal was considered by the Standing Advisory Committee at its meeting held on 6th August, 2003 but the Commitee did not approve the proposal.